

Working together to care for

and's creation

Christian environmentalist John Flenley explains why the Church is called to make a difference.

Does it bother you that extinction of the species that God created is now occurring at the rate of 50 every day? Are you troubled by reports of declining fish stocks, and that tropical forests are being destroyed at the rate of one hectare per minute? Are you concerned about the forecasts of global climate change resulting from atmospheric pollution? If you are concerned, read on.

Perhaps you think that the forecasts of global warming are not yet proved, so we should just wait and see? That is not a good policy. Imagine you are standing in a road and you see a car speeding towards you. Do you wait until you are certain it will hit you, or do you get out of the way now?

Perhaps you think that all this concern is nothing to do with the Church: that the Church is here to save souls, not seals. But read your Bible. God placed us here to have stewardship over Creation (Gen 1:28). We are here as tenants, not owners (Lev 25:23). After the Flood, God made a covenant not just with people, but with all the animals that came out of the ark (Gen 9:10). The Earth is not ours: it is the Lord's, and everything in it (Psalm 24:1).

Aha! You may say. That is Old Testament stuff. What about the New Testament? What did Jesus say about conservation except for a few mentions of sparrows and lilies? Well, he did say that nothing must be wasted (John 6:12). That was after he had just miraculously fed 5000 people. He told the disciples to collect all the waste food, and they gathered 12 baskets. Even though he could create food any time he liked, he still abhorred waste.

Perhaps you think that the end of the world is imminent, so we should hurry things up by destroying the Earth? What! Should we do evil that good may come? Heaven forbid! (Romans 6:2).

Okay, so can the Church make a difference? Are there not many good conservation movements already? Yes, but not enough. The Christian Church, in all its many branches, is the largest non-governmental organisation in the world. It could make a very big difference.

Christians have set up an international Christian conservation organisation. It is called A Rocha, which is Portuguese for "The Rock", which is the name of the place in Portugal where it all began. A Rocha now exists in 19 countries, including New Zealand. A Rocha has five main principles, as follows:

Christian: underlying all we do is our Biblical faith in the living God, who made the world, loves it, and entrusts it to the care of human society.

Conservation: we carry out research and practical work for the conservation and restoration of the natural world, and run environmental education programs for people of all ages.

Community: through our commitment to God, each other and the wider Creation, we aim to develop good relationships both within the A Rocha family and in our local communities.

Cross-cultural: we seek to work together in shared partnerships with tangata whenua and all cultures, both locally and around

Co-operation: we work in partnership with a wide variety of organisations and individuals who share our concerns for a sustainable world. The cross-cultural theme is especially relevant in New Zealand, with its Maori and Pakeha cultures living side by side. For that reason, our title is A Rocha Aotearoa New Zealand (ARANZ for short).

ARANZ has now set up its HQ in Hamilton, with branches in Auckland, Palmerston North, Wellington and Christchurch. We had our first conference at Raglan in May 2008, attended by over 100 people, and hope to have regular conferences in the future. At branch meetings we carry out conservation activities, including propagation and planting of native species of trees and other plants, and control of predators. We have particularly chosen this work for several reasons. On a worldwide basis, tree planting is a way to counter global warming. Trees remove CO2 from the atmosphere and store it in their wood. It has been calculated that if everyone in the world planted 40 trees each, the global warming problem would



Professor John Flenley

be greatly delayed. Trees also prevent soil erosion, which is a problem in many areas. They also provide habitat for wildlife.

In the Palmerston North branch, we planted out 100 trees in 2007, 400 in 2008 and hopefully 1000 in 2009. We collect seed locally from native bush. A wonderful blessing has been the free use of a propagation unit belonging to the Seventh Day Adventist College, which has space for about 10,000 trees annually. Most seedlings are big enough to plant out after one year. One of our planting locations is on the Ruahine range. Soil eroded there ends up on the Manawatu river floodplain around Palmerston North. This raises the ground level, necessitating raising the stop banks, which is very costly. So we are also benefiting the local community.

All the branches need funding for root-trainers (plant pots), potting mix, transport, etc. You can join a local group, or form one of your own, or you can become a financial supporter and receive a free newsletter telling you what is being done in your area and around the country. Or you can pray for us: we need that. It is, in fact, the most important contribution of all. Just contact ARANZ by email (new.zealand@arocha.org) or write to ARANZ, PO Box 19104, Hamilton 3244. Alternatively, go to our website www.

John Henley is on the trust board of ARANZ, convenor of the Palmerston North group and also a member of A Rocha International. He is a retired Professor of Geography at Massey University, with a special interest in biogeography, tropical rain forests and Easter Island. He's also a deacon in the Anglican Church, with a special role in speaking about world environmental crises.

*The next social issues resource from the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand will focus on practical steps people and churches can take to care for Creation, as well as providing a straight-forward explanation of the scientific arguments around climate change. Your parish will receive eight copies during February.

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Editor

Amanda Wells amanda@presbyterian.org.nz Ph 04 381-8285

Advertising

Jose Reader spanzadvertising@presbyterian.org.nz

Subscriptions

Katrina Graham katrina@presbyterian.org.nz Ph 04 381-8283

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The Right Rev Dr Graham Redding contributes a regular column to Spanz

Moderator's Musings

Some events in history are of such significance that people talk about "before" and "after". 9/11 was one of those events. For the first time, war was declared on a largely unknown and stateless enemy – a terrorist network – and upon terror itself.

In our own country, the Terrorism Suppression Act (2002) provided a vehicle for New Zealand to fulfil its obligations under international law to seek to prevent terrorism.

Few of us gave this a lot of thought at the time. New Zealand was simply doing what other nations were doing as America and its allies waged their war on terror.

But this changed on 15 October 2007. On that day, armed police conducted a series of raids around the country under the aegis of the Terrorism Suppression Act to apprehend an alleged terrorist network. The biggest raid focused on the small settlement of Ruātoki in the Urewera, home to the Tuhoe iwi.

For Tuhoe people, the raids evoked bitter memories of a peaceful religious settlement at Maungapohatu being raided by police in 1916. Its leader, Rua Kenana, was arrested on charges of sedition; his son and one of his followers were killed. Whilst Rua was an advocate of Maori self-government (Tuhoe had not signed up to the Treaty of Waitangi), he was opposed to war. Prior to his arrest he had invited a Minister of the Crown to visit the community at Maungapohatu to see for himself its peaceful nature. The invitation was not taken up.

This region, its history and its people are of special significance to the Presbyterian Church. The history of Presbyterian mission among Maori is centred there. The missionary J G Laughton developed a strong friendship with Rua, which brought together the followers of Ringatu, Iharaira and Presbyterian faiths. The men shared a commitment to Maori education, and collaborated on the establishment of a school at Maungapohatu in 1918. Tuhoe conferred rangatira (chief) status on Laughton and, at Rua's behest, Laughton conducted Rua's funeral service in 1937. Laughton's vision of a marae base for the mission culminated in the official opening of Te Maungarongo meeting house at Ohope in 1947. It is here that Te Aka Puaho is based.

In 2007, in a moving ceremony at Maungapohatu, mission land belonging to the Presbyterian Church was gifted back to the Tamakaimoana hapu. Local iwi spoke of how they knew of no other similar gesture in New Zealand where land had been simply returned, without lengthy negotiations or payment.

Interestingly, the Rev Wayne Te Kaawa's grandmother was married to Rua's son and witnessed his killing. Wayne is the director of Te Wananga a Rangi, which trains Amorangi ministers. The day after the Ruātoki raid, he wrote an open letter to the Presbyterian Church, appealing for support for the traumatised community at Ruātoki and urging assistance in protesting the actions of the police to the government. Wayne was not condoning any alleged breaking of the law, but was concerned that the police raids had caught up many innocent people, including children, who were subjected to a siege upon their community by heavily armed police dressed in riot gear.

Seventeen months on, although a small number of prosecutions are before the courts for firearms offences, no evidence has surfaced in relation to the terrorist allegations, and prosecutions under the terms of the Terrorism Suppression Act have been ruled out by the Solicitor General.

One of the primary effects of the Terrorism Suppression Act is to allow the Government to designate groups and people as terrorists. One can understand the need for this in the wake of 9/11. There is a risk, however, that power granted under the Act might be used to suppress criticism, criminalise legitimate protest groups, or justify the excessive use of force by police and the military. We see this happening in other parts of the world. Did that same risk become reality in Ruātoki? Time will tell.

With Barack Obama's election, one senses a significant mood change in American politics that is already having a ripple effect throughout the world. One commentator described it in terms of the politics of fear, borne of 9/11, giving way to the politics of hope. Hope is a Gospel category. It's early days of course, but wouldn't it be great if we really were able to move out of the shadow of 9/11?

Grace and peace to you all.



resbyterian and Uniting churches around New Zealand are turning Lent, often misunderstood by the secular world, into a season of both reflection and action. Angela Singer reports.

The perception of Lent in the wider community can be somewhat grim. Try asking your non-churchgoing friends "what is Lent?" and see the varied and odd replies you receive:

"You mean borrowed?"

"Something about not eating fish and meat."

"A time before Easter when Christians stop eating chocolate, and then eat lots of chocolate on Easter."

"Christians wearing ashes and praying to have their sins taken away."

Lent is not a vegetarian diet, nor is it delayed gratification or self interest. With so much misunderstanding in the wider community, little wonder it's difficult for churches to reach out to New Zealand's increasingly secular culture and find ways to share this time of spiritual discipline.

But the Church itself has not always marked Lent with enthusiasm; some churches considered it to be too closely associated with "High Church" liturgical worship and for a time Lent was a season unobserved.

In recent years, Presbyterian churches have drawn on tradition to adapt and to create new devotions and liturgies for the Lenten season.

Thought to have originated during the 4th century of the church, Lent is a time of stripping down to essentials so that individuals can focus on their relationship with God. Lent lasts for 40 days from Ash Wednesday, through Holy Week, and concludes the Saturday before Easter Sunday (because Sundays celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, the six Sundays during Lent are not counted as part of the 40 days of Lent; instead they are referred to as the "Sundays in Lent").

The number 40 appears with significance throughout the Bible. The 40 days of Lent are thought to correlate with the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness fasting.

Lent was originally observed as a time of preparation before baptism. Those to be baptised, including members of their community of faith, focused on concentrated prayer and study prior to the Easter Vigil, which is the celebration of the Resurrection on Easter Sunday. Lent was also a time when those who had distanced themselves from the Church could prepare to return to the faith community.

Colours associated with Lent are primarily purple and violet, which are the Western liturgical colours symbolising the suffering of Jesus prior to crucifixion and the suffering of humanity and the world. They are also the colours of royalty, symbolising the coming Resurrection on Easter Sunday. Other colours that might be used at Lent are grey on Ash Wednesday (symbolising mourning and repentance) and red on Maundy Thursday (symbolising the disciples). The sanctuary colour of Good Friday and Holy Saturday is traditionally black (symbolising the death of Jesus). White is the colour that replaces black before the sunrise of Easter Sunday (Resurrection).

Today, Lent is a time of introspection, self examination, repentance and preparation to celebrate Easter. Traditionally marked by penitential prayer, almsgiving and strict fasting of one meal a day, many Christians now do not observe fasting from food, choosing instead to abstain from alcohol, television or the computer. A church may focus on charitable acts that help the less fortunate in their community, that care for the local environment, or choose to donate money to a worthy cause.

Some churches create their own devotions and liturgies during the Lenten season that have significance to their faith community, or utilise those already in existence, such as Stations of the Cross. Here are some of the many inspiring ways that Presbyterian churches observe and celebrate the season of Lent.

An environmentally aware Lent is being planned by St Heliers Presbyterian in Auckland. The Rev Pauline Stewart says they are inviting households to make the first Sunday of Lent a day without electricity.

"We will conduct all our Sunday morning services and activities on that day without using electricity. The idea came from a member of our church who is a roading engineer working in India and Borneo. He sees many villages without electricity [and the people] find ways to enjoy life. We are thinking of working out the cost we will save in electricity and making that a mission donation".

Pauline says the real work will be in, "challenging one another to spend time doing simple relational things and turning off the 'e' things for a while".

Combining mission, abstinence and charity for Lent also happened at the church last year. Pauline says, "we wanted households to be involved in raising funds for those less fortunate by doing without things. Funds raised were for the boys at the Pakpingjai Hostel in Chang Rai (our ongoing mission project) to go on a trip to the beach, as the boys have never seen the ocean. It was a project our children could totally understand and relate to".

"We had a list of ideas to 'go without' and we presented these each Sunday: do without tuck-shop at school for a month and take a packed lunch; don't have a coffee and croissant just once; walk to a destination instead of driving; no treats at the movies; no wine at dinner for a week or more.

"Households really got into the spirit of it. Every Sunday people [brought] their containers full of coins. Children were very pleased doing without tuck-shop or without hiring DVDs. They saw the value of what they had not spent. Several hundred dollars was raised, as was the awareness of our Pakpingjai project to a larger group of people. There was a deep sense of participating in service and the joy of giving by doing without."

Pauline says that in 2007 her church similarly raised funds during Lent to buy goats for a village in Bangladesh.

The Lenten focus at the Ahuriri Putorino parish, Napier, during the past three years has been a series of sermons preparing for Easter, say the Rev Howard Carter. "I have preached on, 'Jesus' sayings on the cross, a soul cries out' (a series of messages from Psalm 22). In 2006 I did a series called 'Landscapes of the Soul', focusing on Psalm 107. I invited people to identify their lives with the various landscapes mentioned in that Psalm. In 2007 I concluded a long series called 'Close encounters of the Jesus kind' by focusing on Jesus' road to the cross".



Howard is also involved in ecumenical Lenten services. "In Napier, the central city churches get together for a series of half-hour Lenten reflections. Ministers from Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodist and Catholic parishes take turns hosting; each church adds their flavour to the event".

Environmental awareness is a strong Lenten focus at Wadestown Presbyterian in Wellington. The Rev Sharon Ensor will revisit the Lenten eco-walk she developed last year. Each week she will offer a different eco-theme, and suggestions of things people can do to live in more sustainable and environmentally appreciative ways.

Wadestown also offers a special Lent study series, Sharon says. "Last year it was *Christ and the Chocolaterie* based on the movie 'Chocolat'. This year we'll be running one based on the book and DVD by Brian McLaren titled, *Everything Must Change: Jesus, Global Crises and a Revolution of Hope*".

"I'm also planning to have a focus during the Sundays of Lent on "spiritual practices". Alongside this the congregation will be encouraged to intentionally focus on the practise of hospitality; to think about how we can be hospitable to friends, neighbours, people from the congregation, the 'stranger', and how to put that into action.

"Lent is a powerful and rich theme in terms of reflecting on the path Jesus takes to the cross and what that calls out of us as people who claim to follow him," Sharon says.

For the past two years, St John's Co-operating Parish in Bucklands Beach has offered its congregation what session clerk Elizabeth Speer describes as, "a slightly different experience on Good Friday, to facilitate a deeper immersion in the events of the final day of the life of Jesus".

Elizabeth explains that in 2007 the Stations of the Cross was offered using a variety of media. "Bible readings, meditations, audio visuals, dramatisation and symbols were used to assist reflection. It was not a production but rather a freer and looser presentation to allow people's thoughts to go deeper into a personal response".

Stone-filled flax kite bags were used to weigh down a cross and "represented the burdens we make Jesus bear".

"Some of these we named aloud as betrayal (of him and one another through the breaking of confidences, malicious gossip); greed for material things; abuse of power and people; and hatred and lack of forgiveness.

"People were invited to take a stone from the kite and to carry it for Jesus in acknowledgment of their part in the burden he bore and still bears for us," Elizabeth says.

In 2008 St John's had a simple cross-centred Lenten presentation called, "The Purple Shrouded Cross", based on material from Seasons of the Spirit (an online resource site at www.spiritseasons.com).

"The purple cloth draped on the cross represented the mystery of his death, our grieving and our honouring of his sacrifice," Elizabeth says, "linking the pain and suffering endured by Jesus with our pain and brokenness. Individuals were invited to come forward and offer a symbol of brokenness and grief by placing broken shards of pottery on the purple cloth".

Alongside traditional Bible readings, St John's has used meditations by Michel Quoist and those from Iona Community publications; Easter songs by Scott Krippayne and Father Chris Skinner; and the ImageVine videos (www.imagevine.com), "Put to Death" and "What does love sound like?"

Elizabeth says, "presenting the story we know so well in a different and more visual way enabled church goers to becoming more deeply immersed and to experience the depth of love shown on the day of crucifixion".

The Rev Stephanie Wells of Maniototo Parish, Central Otago, says she is considering running a six-week Lenten study group, probably on the subject of prayer. Last year's topic was the movie *Chocolat*. "We also have a Stations of the Cross walk around town; an ecumenical tradition here."

Stephanie says that she is planning for the first time a Stations of the Cross art event for Holy Week. "I am trying to encourage artists to make a response to one of the Easter events, from Palm Sunday to Christ's burial. It is at a planning stage at the moment,



but the plan is to empty the church of pews to make a gallery to display the works from Easter Monday to Wednesday. I'm not sure what it will be called, but since we are on the Otago Rail Trail, 'Stations of the Cross' fits very well'.

Prayer will be the theme at Knox Church, Waitara, this Lent. The Rev Dennis Flett says that two weeks prior to Easter, "we will be engaging in seven days of prayer. It had a huge impact on our church last year."

Charity to help those facing the challenges of ill health will be the Lenten focus at Christchurch North Presbyterian. The Rev Sally Carter says her parish will have an almsgiving project for hospital chaplaincy.

Lenten almsgiving projects have proved to be very successful, especially when organised at a national level. In Australia, Lent Event is a community-based Uniting Church movement that raises large funds for Uniting Church Overseas Aid by getting people to give up a luxury during Lent and donate the money saved. This well-supported event began as the initiative of a single church and has been running for about eight years. Its success is thought to stem from its combination of fundraising with spiritual journeying, and its being open to people of all religions or none. Free Lenten resources can be found on the website www.lentevent.com. (The Presbyterian Church website has free Lent services resources at www.presbyterian.org.nz/5019.0.html and Epworth Books has Lent resources for sale at www.epworthbooks.org.nz).

Some overseas Lenten projects have been both radical and effective. Church Action on Poverty, a United Kingdom ecumenical social justice charity working in partnership with churches, issued a Lenten Challenge to churchgoers: reduce your disposable income to the equivalent of the minimum wage for the six weeks of Lent and maintain a weekly balanced budget for food, clothes, entertainment and luxury items (the minimum wage for adults in NZ is \$12 an hour before tax). Church Action on Poverty invited those who took part in the challenge to join in praying and reflecting on the realities of living on a low income in the midst of an affluent society.

Niall Cooper from Church Action on Poverty described the Lent Challenge thus: "For many people, to live in poverty is to live permanently in Lent; struggling to meet essential needs without the solace of other distractions to make the fight easier. Christians should not feel comfortable that this type of existence continues. It's relatively easy to see a link between unemployment and poverty, but there are also many people employed fulltime who are paid too little to experience life other than as a constant struggle for survival. Long hours worked to increase income throw up a whole series of problems; tiredness, stress and long periods away from home and family".

Raising awareness about issues that impact us as a nation is the Lenten theme for a New Zealand Christian World Service project. The idea for a national ecological Lent project came out of a Methodist School of Theology in Queenstown in March 2008. The concept has quickly grown into a wider movement called, "Walk for the Planet". According to CWS, "it's an opportunity for people during Lent 2009 to express concern for the well-being of planet Earth, and to share hope for the future".

During the 40 days of Lent, it's proposed that those taking part walk from Stewart Island starting on Ash Wednesday 25 February, reach Invercargill on Sunday 1 March, then on to Dunedin Sunday 8 March, Oamaru Sunday 15 March, Timaru Sunday 22 March, Christchurch Sunday 29 March, Kaikoura Sunday 5 April, Picton Maundy Thursday 9 April, finally arriving at Wellington on Easter Sunday 12 April.

Walkers will aim to raise environmental awareness within each community they pass, and to share their hope for the future. The six Sundays during Lent will be used as rest days and walkers do not have to walk all legs (no pun intended). For more information or to register for the walk see the website www.walk4theplanet. org.nz Spanz

Struggling professionals seek budget advice

Doctor and lawyer are two professions we associate both with success and with a degree of wealth, rather than people likely to need the help of a budgeting service.

Yet a doctor and a lawyer are two recent clients of Presbyterian Support Northern's budget service manager Maureen Little, who has since taken over management of their money. The Money Management Service requires every salary cheque to be paid directly to the service, with Maureen then paying the client's bills from this money and giving them an amount with which to buy food.

"It's something we have quite a few of our Housing NZ clients on", says Maureen, "and we have seen a gradual increase in the numbers of professional people who also need the service. It's definitely climbed in the last three months. The recent spate of redundancies has made people nervous and they are wondering if they are next; revaluating their financial position they realise they might be in trouble".

The biggest debt Maureen has encountered this year is that of a young woman who owes \$285,000, "and there wasn't a mortgage in that", Maureen says, "nor a student loan. It was all credit card debt and personal loans. Her income was very low so all she could do was go bankrupt. Someone was going to eventually force her to so she just got there first".

Generation Y (those born between 1978 and 1994) make up the largest number of new clients the service is seeing because, Maureen says, credit has been very easy for them to obtain. "They are now the biggest owners of debt that we see. It's quite disappointing that they are so blasé about the amount they owe. For the past five years I've been calling for credit companies to cut back on the credit they give to young people and now finally, with the credit crunch, lenders are not making it so easy for them".

Those unable to pay off their mortgage make up another group of clients that the service sees. Maureen says, "I have had four clients in recently, all far behind on their mortgage repayments. We've done



Presbyterian Support Northern's Maureen Little

a budget, then they have gone to talk to their bank; the bank couldn't help them so they have dropped the keys to their home into the bank and said 'it's all yours'. The banks don't want this, they want people to work their way out, but in the end if there isn't the income to pay the interest or the principle, something's got to give".

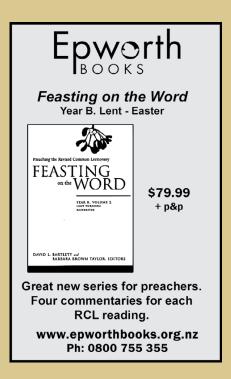
Maureen says she is also seeing older people who are having problems paying their mortgages. "People who have revolving mortgages get to 65 years old and suddenly realise that their mortgage is as big now as it was 10 years ago, and that NZ Super is not going to cut the mustard".

Maureen says it should be easier for two income families to cope with mortgage debt but that is not always the case. "I tell them it's best not to need to commit both wages and that they should try to manage on just one wage, then the other wage is all for fun. But a lot of people now have both wages fully stretched and live week to week. If they lose one wage they are in difficulty".

Helping people over an unexpectedly large bill or a temporary "hump" is something that congregations have been involved in, says Maureen. "We have had churches that have paid the power bills of families. Churches often like to see the money go directly to a family they hear about through our service. It helps the family over the hump for a month and makes it a lot easier for them to sort their other bills out".

"When I go out into the community and give my speeches I often say that it's lovely to 'adopt' a child from overseas, but it helps to 'adopt' a family here in NZ, in your community, and make a real difference to their lives".

By Angela Singer Spanz



Does giving slump during a recession?

As the New Zealand economy continues to contract, charities and aid organisations are wondering if New Zealanders will continue their famed generosity.

It would seem likely that one of the first expenses to be cut when things get financially tight is charitable giving. But an opposing trend is being seen by British and United States charities, with most reporting no decrease in funding from individual private donors over the past year. Online donations in the US continued to grow in 2008. It is thought that instead of cutting back on giving, people are become more selective about the charity they give to.

The US Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University found that, "most households continue to give during times of financial insecurity, although some give less", suggesting that individual giving is recession resistant, not recession proof.

Spending decisions are questions of priorities and donors may not cut charitable giving first, says Professor Cathy Pharoah, director of the independent ESRC Centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy in the United Kingdom. "Charities can help themselves by demonstrating that contributions are both needed and having a measurable impact. Lapsed donors often say they lost faith in the effectiveness of their giving."

Comparing aid organisations can be difficult, but one factor in which donors are taking more interest is how much of their donation supports their chosen cause and how much is kept by the aid organisation.

A December 2008 phone survey by *Spanz* of six aid organisations operating in New Zealand revealed that two well known Christian aid organisations, Tear Fund and World Vision, keep up to 25 percent of every donation. Tear Fund says it keeps on average 20-24 percent; World Vision says it keeps on average 22 percent.

Oxfam keeps around 22 percent of your donation, splitting this into approximately 4 percent kept for administration and 18 percent that's, "invested to generate income to get their message out there".



Christian World Service (CWS) keeps no more than 10 percent. NZ Red Cross says that when a donation is part of a special appeal, 100 percent is passed on, but with other donations it keeps approximately 10 percent.

The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand's own Global Mission Office is the only organisation contacted that keeps no administration costs and sends 100 percent of all donations on to the disaster or project designated.

Although the forecast for future giving during the recession doesn't look as bad as might be expected, if money does become tight, it is likely that people will find other non-financial ways to donate: for example, donating their time or goods. One of the reasons for this is that giving makes a majority of people feel good, or as the scientists would put it, giving activates the brain's pleasure centres. The University of Oregon recently conducted research on the brain effects of donating money to a worthy cause. People were given \$100 and their brain activity was monitored via an MRI scan as the money was transferred to a food bank's bank account. Then the test was repeated but the subjects were allowed to choose how to donate the money. In the automatic transfer of funds to the food bank, pleasure areas of the brain were significantly lit up. In the second part of the study, when the subject chose how to donate the money, the effect was even greater. By Angela Singer Spanz

This year for the first time, you can claim back 1/3 of all your charitable donations.
There's no limit on the amount you can receive.

What will you do with your refund?

Will you consider continuing your cycle of giving, and donating it again?

If you want to support Church growth initiatives in New Zealand, you could give to Press Go.

If you want to help struggling Christians overseas, you could get in touch with the Global Mission Office.

All money given to Press Go and to the GMO goes straight to designated projects; none is retained for administrative purposes.

More information is available at www.presbyterian.org.nz or by calling (04) 801-6000

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Who is Calvin?

The name John Calvin conjures up images of puritanical repression for many, but is his reputation deserved? On the eve of his 500th birthday, Amanda Wells asks theologians about Calvin's complex legacy.

John Calvin was born 500 years ago, in the city of Noyon, France, though it's with Geneva that he is most strongly associated. Calvin died the same year that William Shakespeare was born, and has exerted a similarly strong influence on the development of Western thought.

Reformed Churches around the world are being encouraged to mark the occasion during 2009 and to reflect on Calvin's legacy. The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand is a member of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, which represents 75 million Reformed Protestants in 214 Churches in 107 countries. WARC is calling on member Churches to plan special events for the weekend of 10 July, which is Calvin's birthday.

In New Zealand, the University of Otago and the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership are planning a conference for 23-25 August. The keynotes speakers will be major names in Calvin scholarship: Elsie McKee from Princeton Theological Seminary and Randall Zachman from Notre Dame University.

One of the conference organisers is Professor Ivor Davidson, of Otago's Department of Theology and Religious Studies.

Ivor describes Calvin's legacy as complex and up for debate.

"Calvin and Calvinism are often seen as synonymous with doom and gloom, dour religion and moral repression. The poet James K Baxter famously described Dunedin as 'Calvin's town' - a place where Calvin's Presbyterian heirs had held oppressive sway over people's freedoms. Such images die hard. But there's a huge amount more to Calvin and his influences than popular notions often assume."

Aspects of today's education, science and industry owe a debt to Calvin and this will be explored at the multidisciplinary conference, which will draw on history, theology and literature.

"There's a huge amount of ignorance of Calvin as a man and as a thinker. It's startling to me how little read Calvin is," Ivor says.

"Calvin is much more readable than many people imagine.

"Calvin's theology is rich in many of the major themes of the Christian faith: the freedom of God's love and grace, the primacy of divine action in salvation, the centrality of Jesus Christ, the privileges of faith, the essential connection between knowledge of God and knowledge of ourselves."

To paraphrase, we are God's creatures, so studying God tells us about ourselves as human beings. And because we know God through Jesus, who is known through Scripture, Biblical study plays a crucial role.

Calvin was primarily a Biblical scholar and wrote huge amounts of exegesis, which is one reason why summarising his thought is difficult. As part of a second generation of Reformed thinkers, Calvin's thinking also builds a synthesis of earlier thought.

Calvin might have some sharp questions about expressions of worship today, Ivor says.

"He would remind us of the centrality of God in our worship, and ask us to consider its implications for what we are doing. To what extent is our approach informed by the logic of the Gospel? Or to what extent is it driven by pragmatic and personal concerns? What are your primary preoccupations when you're worshipping?

"There needs to be an acknowledgement of who we are in light of God."

And Calvin might not be a huge fan of modern forms of worship, Ivor says. "He would say that the Christian Gospel has massively relevant implications for our contemporary society."

But while he placed a strong emphasis on human sinfulness, "Calvin was not a kill joy."

"I'd like the Church in New Zealand to begin to take Calvin seriously again."

"He has positive things to say about human experience, along with a rich conception of Christian life and Christian ethics as an expression of freedom."

Church historian the Rev Dr Peter Matheson has spent his career studying the Reformation of the 15th and 16th centuries.

Peter describes Calvin's big contribution as recognising the need for effective Church organisation. "He had a blueprint for the organisation of the Church, with a huge shift of power to lay people. Our Presbyterian system still largely goes back to that time."

Calvin also wanted ordinary people to be able to understand Church thinking, Peter says.

"A huge amount of his work went into commentaries and catechisms, which were a teaching tool well suited to people without literacy."

Calvin saw religion as being relevant to the whole of life. "It wasn't just a Sunday party: it was every aspect of life should somehow become a reflection of God's will."

"That's one of the hall marks of Calvinism; an optimism that we can change for the better the structure of society. Calvinism had this confidence that we can bring society closer to God's will."

Peter says Calvin wasn't willing to confine his teaching to spiritual messages but saw it as an obligation for Christians to provide a critique of tyrannical rule.

"I think in our structure we still retain something of the Calvinist tradition. I think we also have quite a strong tradition of prophetic critique of government."

In the 17th century, many of Calvin's ideas were formalised in documents like the Westminster Confession.

Peter says New Zealand in the 19th century saw a reformation against what people perceived as the "intellectual terrorism" of Calvinism, which meant the rigidity of things like predestination, which refers to the idea that whether you are saved or not saved is preordained by God.

But Peter says that this perception of Calvinism would not necessarily be realised by the people of Calvin's day. "Why were the lively progressive people of the 16th century so taken by Calvinism, if all it was about was predestination? For countless Christians across Europe, Calvin opened up the Bible to lay people, proposed an effective, less top-heavy way of running the Church, and encouraged an ongoing dialogue with the best of scholarship, and a passionate commitment to education and social justice."

Ivor says, "Calvin certainly had an account of predestination that many people would find problematic these days."

But while predestination might be an idea strongly associated with Calvinism, it was not Calvin's main concern, nor were his views considered innovative by contemporaries.

And predestination did not mean that people were not free. Ivor says that Calvin saw all of life as lived under the sovereignty of God, "but it's in recognising this that we find real fulfillment".

"History demonstrates the liberating potential of this message."

A church named Calvin

The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand has one church named after Calvin – Calvin Presbyterian Church in Gore, which was established in 1961. According to the book *From the Kirk on the Hill, 1881-1981* by J F Mc Arthur, the name was suggested partly in response to the number of "Knox" churches New Zealand had.

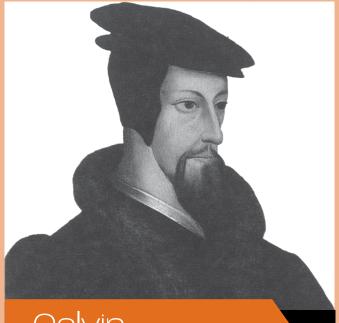
Current minister the Rev Peter Cheyne describes being named after Calvin as a "mixed blessing".

"Calvin was in fact a caring and diligent pastor. He believed in the authority of Scripture as the word of God and was committed to steadfastly preaching and teaching. He preached five different sermons per week. The *Institutes* were written to encourage and defend those being persecuted for their Protestant beliefs and as an explanation of Christianity. His theology was hammered out in the context of pastoral ministry.

"Calvin might be criticised for the rigour of his proposed social reforms in Geneva but they too reflect his passion for faith being lived. Calvin endured much opposition and many threats to his life but stood firm against false teaching and immoral living. Those are all things that are important to us, as a Church, as well.

"All Presbyterian churches are part of Calvin's heritage and are indebted to him for many things: the priority given to preaching (especially expository preaching), our Presbyterian form of leadership, congregational singing, and his development of the historical-grammatical method of interpretation of the scriptures (as against the allegorical method of the medieval Catholic Church), which we now take for granted.

"Calvin was a man whose life and theology revolved around the desire to glorify God. I can only think that if we, as a church, knew more about him we would be further inspired and better equipped to bring glory to God ourselves."



Calvin remember<u>ed...</u>

"I began studying Calvin in Cambridge in 1961. One of his finest contributions is in describing how we live in Christ, in his Body the Church.

"Calvin's great theology, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* is written in four parts. The third book on the Christian life begins with four short paragraphs on the power of the Holy Spirit, who unites us to Christ so that we share in his life as his members. This chapter governs everything Calvin has to say about living in Christ personally (Book III) and together in the fellowship of the Church (Book IV).

"The Church for Calvin shares one Body in union with Christ. The Church lives because of what Christ has done for us all. Christ is one with us, living among us so that he can be for us and act on our behalf and in our place. We are united with Christ, sharing his life and all his benefits so that we can be with him in glory. Calvin reclaimed the thinking of the Church fathers in restating this. He renewed our understanding of the Church as a dynamic community united with Christ, its ascended reigning Head. The Christian life is lived in the power of the Spirit so that we live in communion with Christ in his one Body." - Rev Dr Graeme Ferguson

Want more Calvin information? A variety of resources are available at www.calvin09.org and www.warc.ch





Freedom of choice leads away from church – survey



Professor Ronald Inglehart

ounger generations have already shifted away from institutions like the Church, according to social scientist Professor Ronald Inglehart.

The World Values Survey director gave a lecture in Wellington late last year as part of the 60th anniversary of the Fulbright programme. The survey covers 90 percent of the world's population and explores what countries believe and value.

Ronald, who is based at the University of Michigan in the United States, says while changes in belief and culture are hard to see, repeated international surveys allow them to be tracked. "From 1981 to the present, we have found really dramatic changes."

"People are coming to value freedom of choice, space and participation in decision-making more."

According to the data collected by the World Values Survey, industrialisation brings a shift from traditional values to secular-rational values. Then, as societies shift from industrial to post industrial, another values shift occurs: a growing proportion of many people in developed societies have grown up taking survival for granted, so they place higher priority on self-expression. This can be seen in growing emphasis on freedom of choice, gender equality, environmental protection, and

tolerance for groups previously considered on the margins, such as foreigners and gay and lesbian people.

The shift towards tolerance occurs over successive generations rather than within an age group, Ronald says. "The [trend of] long-term generational change is very stable.

"People don't change their values overnight... Younger groups emphasise self-expression values much more than older groups."

For these younger groups, "the old institutions are not where the action is," he says, and these bureaucracies are fading worldwide.

Instead, there is growth in invisible communities linked by shared values rather than organisations. "It's a different kind of tie but a real tie" — with links maintained via new media, such as the Internet, particularly networking sites like Bebo and Facebook, and text messaging.

The Rev Dr Kevin Ward of Dunedin's Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership, who has a background in sociology, says

the World Values Survey is highly regarded and widely used by the sociological community.

"It's really significant for the Church and is an actual change that's taking place. It's not going to revert back to the way things were."

Kevin says while he does not think the Church will die off, it will be "smaller and less institutional".

"If we keep having a framework that only values the physical community, then we just turn that generation off."

The sense of community has shifted away from geography, he says. "The geographical community has become less and less significant, apart from for older people."

For younger people, communities have a more mobile sense, he says, and tend "to travel with people". What keeps these communities connected is both technology and a strong sense of shared values.

"But there is always a need for face-toface interaction," Kevin says. Online communication doesn't replace face-to-face relationships because "humanly we long for that."

In terms of faith expression, younger generations might attend church or meet up with a Christian group less often but still consider themselves regular, committed members. They welcome other non-physical communication during their gaps in attendance.

Kevin says a different attitude is needed from church leaders, who have spent many years focused on getting people in the doors on Sunday. "Our approach now much more needs to be about making connections and resourcing."

Churches can connect their members through blogs, websites, email newsletters and making sermons available online.

The assumption that if people aren't involved in the Sunday morning institution then they're not really part of the community is unhelpful and ends up pushing people away, Kevin says.

"Either we have to adapt or we will just be bypassed." By Amanda Wells SDENZ

Review

Booklet celebrates key missionaries to Tuhoe

Reviewed by Amanda Wells

In *Hihita & Hoani*, we hear the story of two Presbyterians whose influence on the Tuhoe people has been profound and long-lasting.

This booklet was professionally produced in conjunction with an exhibition held at Whakatane District Museum and Gallery last year, with text written by the Rev Wayne Te Kaawa, who also heads up Amorangi training centre Te Wananga a Rangi.

The nicely designed catalogue is divided into two sections, the first covering the life of Hihita or Ann Henry, often known as Sister Annie, a teacher originally from Southland who was passionate about the Maori missions.

In 1917, after graduating from the Deaconess College, Sister Annie accepted a position in Ruatahuna in the heart of the Urewera Ranges, even though she was unsure of its actual location.

Wayne writes sensitively of Sister Annie's gradual integration into the community and her growing reputation, which provided other missionaries with an entrée into Tuhoe society. She became known as Hihita, a Maori transliteration of Sister, which was also interpreted by children to mean "I love Sister".

"The welfare of the children in Ruatahuna was Sister Annie's driving passion and motivation," Wayne says, resulting in her being accorded an unprecedented degree of freedom and respect by the communities throughout the Urewera.

She became one of New Zealand's first woman Justices of the Peace and also the President of the Ruatahuna Rugby Football Club, opening the season every year by kicking off the ball at the first game.

Sister Annie served for 32 years in Ruatahuna, retiring to Ohope Beach but continuing to care for the Tuhoe people when she could, until her death at the age of 96.

The second half of the booklet tells the story of the Rev John Laughton, who was a contemporary of Hihita and was appointed to establish a mission and school at Maungapohatu, one of the most remote Urewera settlements, in 1918.

After negotiating the delicate politics of the area, where prophet Rua Kenana also had his base, John, who became known as Hoani, established a covenant relationship. This meant that Rua gave his support to the Presbyterian Church by agreeing to Hoani educating the children.

Inspired by his immersion in Maori communities, Hoani became a student of Te Reo and made attempts to translate relevant Bible texts and give sermons in the language of his congregation.

He became fluent and was regarded as a scholar of the Maori language.



As the only ordained minister in the Urewera, Hoani regularly completed 300km round trips on horseback as he performed funerals, baptisms, confirmations and communion services for the greater Tuhoe community.

When Hoani died in 1965, his tangi saw 2000 people wait for his body to arrive at Ohope Marae. A total of 8000 mourners travelled to pay their respects, and the service was attended by 60 ministers from a variety of denominations.

In his essays, Wayne provides a unique insight into the early missions to Maori in the Urewera, bringing alive the stories of two Presbyterian pioneers. Complete with period photographs and elegant design, it's a moving testament to their faith and lasting influence.

You can order the booklet from Whakatane Museum, phone (09) 306-0505, for \$5 plus postage and packaging.

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For more information contact:
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email trustees@presbyterian.org.nz

APW speaker secures billions for

AIDS fight

A leading international HIV/AIDS advocate will be the keynote speaker at the Association of Presbyterian Women's AGM in May in Palmerston North.

Linda Bales, United States director of the Louise and Hugh Moore Population Project for the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society, will speak on HIV/AIDS, family planning and reproductive health, comprehensive sex education and domestic violence.

"I'll be talking about HIV/AIDS and domestic violence because they are pandemics in the States and around the world", Linda says.

Linda, who is on the United Methodist Global Aids Fund Committee, says she works, "at a number of levels with HIV and AIDS".

"Our denomination set up its own AIDS fund about four years ago to mobilise millions of dollars to go to HIV/AIDS projects around the world".

Linda would like to see the United Methodist Church have greater access on the ground to "some of these pots of money from the US government. We are trying to get some of the African bishops to mobilise themselves, to take advantage of this money going to Africa. They haven't done a very good job of that yet".

"We do mobilise people to be a prophetic voice," Linda says. "We play the United Methodist card whenever we can, reminding politicians that there are 8 million United Methodists in the United States. Of course, not all agree with every position we take".

The stigma attached to HIV/AIDS can make her work both difficult and slow, Linda says. "Because Aids has sexuality laced into it, we are slowly building momentum within the Church."

The success of recent HIV/AIDS advocacy work, and her role within it, is something that greatly pleases Linda.

"I've put in a lot of effort over the last few months on a major HIV/AIDS Bill that was passed by the US Congress, signed by then-President Bush, and that will provide \$48 billion over the next five years for HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria worldwide. To work on that was an honour, and it was very exciting."

The funds will be administered by the Office of Global AIDS in the US government. However, actually getting the \$48 billion to distribute may not be easy. Linda explains that just because the Bill has been signed does not mean that every year the money will be there. "It's a two-part process called authorisation and appropriation; the Bill is an authorising one, so now every year Congress will have to vote how much money they are really going to spend on it."

At this time, Linda will again be called on to utilise her passion and skills to advocate with government. "There will be for me a level of advocacy that happens around this each year for five years. We are in a very severe economic crisis but President Obama is very supportive of this Bill so I suspect that each year the budget request will be received well, but weighed against the US economy. For President Bush, this was one of his legacies".

Linda thinks that ex-President Bush was influenced in his support for the Bill by a combination of trips to Africa to see the problem first hand; by Irish rock star and advocate Bono (who also visited Africa); and by the hundreds of AIDS organisations in the States that kept up sustained lobbying of the government.

"Another influence was the visit by then US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, who went on a trip to Africa with Bono and his heart was, as we would say in Methodism, strangely warmed. He was a converted soul, so that helped a lot too," Linda says.

By Angela Singer

The APW has produced a brochure outlining the challenges HIV/AIDS poses for women. This was distributed in the December issue of *Spanz*; you can order more free copies by emailing info@presbyterian.org.nz.

The Parish of Mayfield

seeks expressions of interest in negotiating a 0.5 ministry for a fixed term of three years.

The Parish is situated in Mid Canterbury and centred on the farming district of Mayfield, 40 kms inland from Ashburton.

The congregation seeks a person with a strong, personal prayerful relationship with God and with a vision to lead the parish.

Expressions of interest

can be made to the convenor of the Board of Settlement.

> Alex Wright R D 12, Rakaia. 7782 joan@wrightfarms.co.nz

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ADVANCE NOTICE:

Paeroa Co-operating Parish will be celebrating



of worship in the former St Andrew's Presbyterian Church Over the weekend of 1-2 August 2009

Former members of the Paeroa Methodist and Presbyterian parishes interested in attending, or wanting further details, contact

> Centenary Celebrations, PO Box 54, Paeroa, 3600

PASTORAL VACANCY

The congregation of St Aidan's Presbyterian Church situated in Northcote, an inner suburb of North Shore City (Regional Auckland) is theologically liberal, but liturgically (worship) traditional. It seeks a minister who is a strong leader and good motivator to work in the parish and wider community. S/he must be able to relate well to people of all ages, from diverse ethnic and social backgrounds.

Expressions of interest should be directed to the convener of the ministry settlement board, Rev Michelle Shin:

Chaplaincy Service, North Shore Hospital, Private Bag 93-503, Takapuna, North Shore City, and Auckland.

Michelle.Shin@waitematadhb.govt.nz

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IDEALLY YOU WILL HAVE:

- > previous experience in working with youth and running camps and activities
- > the ability to work with individuals and develop teams
- > an understanding of how to work in community

For a full job description and application form, please contact Sue Spindler, email: sue.spindler@gmail.com, or phone 03 339-6647.

Applications close on Friday 27th February 2009.

Surprise visitors revitalise Renwick

This time last year, the dozen people who gathered to worship at the Presbyterian church in Renwick, Malborough, were wondering how much longer they would endure.

The small congregation, all women bar one, were growing older but continued to pray that God would reveal their purpose.

Part of the Wairau Presbyterian Parish, Renwick was the first Presbyterian church in Marlborough and celebrated its 150th jubilee in 2007.

Congregation member Ruth Newman says the congregation had become smaller and smaller over the years.

"Twenty or 30 years ago, the Sunday school was our life blood". Then the numbers of children faded away, eventually leaving "just a remnant hanging on", with sometimes as few as six people at worship.

This was in the context of significant growth in the region, which is at the heart of the Marlborough wine area. Renwick is 11km out of Blenheim on the road to Nelson and has a growing population of about 1800.

Elder June Evans says the congregation continued to pray about its role in the community, and particularly prayed that more men would join, but "several times during the last five years, we're said 'do we carry on here?'".

One Sunday last June, when the person on duty for morning tea had brought eight biscuits as usual, their prayers received a totally unexpected answer.

Waiting on the doorstep of the church were 19 men from Vanuatu.

These men were working on vineyards in the area as part of the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme, which allows the horticulture and viticulture industries to bring in temporary workers from Pacific Island countries.

The Rev Ken Williams, who till the end of last year was minister of the Wairau Presbyterian Parish, says the Renwick congregation "embraced these guys so warmly right from day one".

"It's a great example of a local congregation recognising a change and meeting the needs that are put before them."

While the first group of ni-Van was farewelled at the end of their five-month RSE stint, by then another group of 30 had arrived, in a trend that looks set to continue as long as the RSE scheme remains in operation.

"Our catering skills have improved!" June says. "What's happening over this year has just been so exciting. It's an answer to prayer that we would never have imagined."

Ken says the Renwick congregation have adapted their style of worship, and the new enlarged congregation has worked together to spring clean the church, revitalise its garden and ensure the ni-Van visitors played a part in services.

"They're not just attending; it's become their church."

The farewelling of the first group from Vanuatu saw more than 70 people at their final service and over 100 gathered for the subsequent picnic and barbeque.

When one of the ni-Van men died suddenly from heart problems late last year, the church was a focal point for grief and support, holding a large thanksgiving service.

June says generally about 40 people now gather for worship every Sunday, with the ni-Van group providing a bracket of songs.

June says about half the visitors are comfortable with English, while the other half understand but are less confident speaking.

And not all the ni-Van workers are men – at one stage five ni-Van women, also RSE workers, were part of the church community.

The Renwick locals have attempted to show the visitors around the wider region, June says. "We've taken car loads on trips into the surrounding area, including to the snow in winter."

"It's a tremendous culture shock for them coming here," she says, with daily life presenting significant differences. June tells the story of how one local invited some departing Vanuatu men for dinner at her house. They were intrigued to watch her using the kitchen appliances, and commented that while their rental house had a dishwasher and microwave, they had never realised their purpose.

So now the church offers specific help and advice to any newcomers who want it. "We ask how we can help them," June says.

In the beginning, the church supplied a lot of warm clothing, she says, but employers are now doing a better job and the visitors are better prepared.

Ruth, who spent five weeks in Vanuatu on a mission trip in 1980, says the ni-Van visitors have not been shy to ask the locals some challenging questions about their church. "They said, 'Where are the men? Where are the youth? Where are the children?' They can't understand it because they are still very much based in the family."

She says there is hope that the changes at the church will provide an outreach into the Renwick community. The church's revitalisation "would be very hard not to notice", with lunches on the lawn and "much more coming and going", Ruth says.

"There's an urgency to make sure what we learn about this translates to the men close to home."

Positive developments include locals coming along to recent events and providing practical help, she says, and the congregation continues to pray for guidance.

"We're willing to be surprised by God's plans."

Ken, who has recently taken up a two-year position at Talua Ministry Training Centre in Vanuatu, says Renwick's example shows the huge impact that a small congregation can have.

"They're meeting a very specific need of a sector of their community who are a long, long way from home and finding life quite difficult." By Amanda Wells Spanz

Press Go criteria and board finalised

General Assembly 2008 overwhelmingly endorsed Press Go, which is about freeing up resources for mission projects. GA08 asked that presbyteries have the chance to provide feedback on the criteria. This process was completed in late 2008 and the criteria amended in response. The final version appears to the right.

The Council of Assembly has also finalised the membership of the Press Go board, after receiving nominations from presbyteries.

Convenor: Rev Ray Coster - minister of St Andrew's in Mt Maunganui.

Members: Neville Guy – session clerk of Clevedon Presbyterian, fleet sales manager northern region of Mitsubishi Motors.

Dr John Kernohan – session clerk of Somervell Memorial in Remuera, chairman of the Church Property Trustees, former chief executive of Auckland UniServices Ltd.

Rev Andrew Norton – minister of St Columba @ Botany Downs.

Lisa Wells – elder of East Taieri Presbyterian, communication and fundraising director of Presbyterian Support Otago, director of Lisa Wells Fundraising.

Press Go opens for business

Churches are being called on to consider how they can best support Press Go, with donation packs distributed by the end of February.

General Assembly 2008 actively encouraged all congregations and presbyteries to voluntarily provide a 1 percent return on all investment assets to the Press Go board for supporting growth projects that meet the agreed criteria. GA08 also encouraged all congregations, presbyteries and UDCs to contribute in whatever way they can.

To help start this process, every session clerk will receive a donation pack with information about Press Go. Donations from individuals are also very welcome, and more copies of the donation pack are available from info@presbyterian.org. nz or (04) 801-6000.

Churches, presbyteries (which includes Te Aka Puaho), the Pacific Island Synod and the Council of Asian Congregations can also apply to Press Go to fund their growth projects; application packs are available on request from info@presbyterian.org.nz



Criteria for funding

- 1. The likelihood of the proposed project contributing to the number of those participating in the worshiping life of a congregation.
- 2. The relationship between the cost of the project and the likely benefit.
- 3. The project's sustainability or likelihood of being self-funding in the long term.
- 4. The strength of endorsement by and commitment to the project from a congregation, presbytery, Te Aka Puaho, Pacific Island Synod or the Council of Asian Congregations.
- 5. The ability of the project to be replicated or provide learning and resourcing for the wider Church.
- 6. The level of funding required from Press Go.
- 7. Payment of Assembly Assessment or endorsement by the Resource sub-committee.

The application must be directed toward the achievement of elements of the following;

- » A commitment to making Jesus Christ known.
- » A commitment to outreach and mission beyond those who are already involved.
- » A commitment to finding and restoring the lost.
- » A structure that supports and releases those with skills and gifts for mission.
- » A commitment to welcoming and hospitality.
- » A commitment to providing worship which expresses those matters fundamental to a Reformed faith.

An expanded version of the criteria is available at www.presbyterian.org.nz/pressgo

Presbyterian schools embrace

Vanuatu experience

Five Presbyterian schools are set to visit Vanuatu next year, thanks to a relationship developed by the Global Mission Office.

Rangi Ruru Girls' School, St Andrew's College, St Oran's College, and Turakina Maori Girls' College have definite plans to spend time at Onesua Presbyterian College on Efate, with a trip by St Kentigern College also under consideration.

Global Mission Advisor the Rev Andrew Bell says positive discussions are underway with several other Presbyterian schools.

"All of a sudden, after three or four years of trying, the bug has bitten."

While away, the students experience Vanuatu-style education, are matched with a ni-Van buddy and work on different mission projects.

St Oran's College principal Dawn Ackroyd took four students to Vanuatu for the first time in 2008, with planning for a 2009 visit already well underway. St Oran's students were joined on the trip by four students from Turakina Maori Girls' College, and this partnership will be repeated this year.

Dawn says the "fantastic" trip was a life-changing experience for the students, especially the interaction they had with their buddies from Onesua College.

"The biggest thing was how much the students over there valued their education: they know they are lucky to go to school." For Kiwi teenagers used to taking education for granted, this was eye-opening, Dawn says. One St Oran's student has decided she wants to train as a teacher and return to Vanuatu.

The students organise their own fundraising for the trip, with sausage sizzles, car washes, baby sitting and a mufti day used to raise money.

Dawn says this didn't cover all the costs, with each student also having to make a contribution.



Rangi Ruru students conduct an arts class,

The students on the 2009 trip will have more time for fundraising, having been selected in December 2008. Students had to apply, outlining why they should be selected and what they would be able to offer.

Dawn says more students applied than there were places available on the 10day trip, which will be held at the end of June. Dawn went on the trip herself last year but another staff member will have a turn this year so that the experience is shared around.

St Oran's is a special character school and a sense of service to others unpins its philosophy, Dawn says.

After the trip, the students reported back to the student body, the board of trustees and board of proprietors, made a presentation to Wellington presbytery and also had the opportunity to speak about their experience on Radio New Zealand's Pacific service.

Christchurch's Rangi Ruru Girls' School will make its third trip to Vanuatu in 2009.

The Rev Yvonne Smith, the school's chaplain, says nine students have been on each trip, along with several adults.

Rangi Ruru became involved in Vanuatu through Emily Broughton, a past student who spent a year as an intern at the Global Mission Office in Auckland in 2007. Emily accompanied the students on the first trip.

Yvonne says the experience of "living ni-Van style as opposed to being a tourist was just amazing for them". They spent a day in Vila and saw how both the rich and poor lived, then a week in Onesua, finishing with two days in a resort and some debriefing. Arriving in the resort and having ni-Van people carry their bags was something the students felt very uncomfortable with, Yvonne says, and the impact of that transition was something that stayed with them.

As well as having a ni-Van buddy, in 2008 the girls spent a couple of nights sleeping in the school boarding house, rather than in the better-equipped guest house where they stay the remainder of the time.

During their visit, the students ran art classes, which is a subject Onesua lacks. They had fundraised to bring with them art materials that they could leave behind in Vanuatu.

The Rangi Ruru students also spent time working at Takara school, which is a nearby village school for younger children, where they gave art, reading and music lessons.

Some of the students on the first trip have since finished secondary school and Yvonne says they still talk about their experiences in Vanuatu and their intentions to return in the long term. They don't see the world in quite the same way now, she says.

There is huge interest within the school in going on the trip, Yvonne says, and those that get to go appreciate the opportunity. The next trip will be in September 2009.

"They might think they are going to give; they get given much more."

Onesua principal Jonathon Tarip and his staff provide crucial support for the trips, Yvonne says, and the hosts are incredibly generous. "We would never want to give any sense that we take that for granted."

The Global Mission Office has been promoting these trips to Presbyterian schools as part of a way to link them back to the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, Andrew says.

The GMO brought Jonathan to New Zealand to attend the Church Schools' Conference in 2008, which gave him an opportunity to engage personally with principals.

Andrew says the trips give students a chance to participate in actual mission work, rather than merely donating to a cause. "It's gone from sending donations to making real relationships. The beauty of this is that it puts flesh and bones to the recipients."

The GMO usually gives schools a faceto-face briefing before trips, and provides some administrative support and advice.

"We've tried to mitigate the risks," Andrew says, through practical action such as upgrading the electrical wiring of the guest house at Onesua.

"The beauty of Vanuatu is that it's our closest neighbour but it offers such a contrast to New Zealand." There are only two hours of electricity a day and students have to rise at five every morning.

Andrew's two teenage children visited in 2008, and he says a highlight for them was the relationship formed with their Onesua buddy. "There were genuine tears when our teenagers left."

"It's an immersion experience in another place that's as safe as possible, with English so they can communicate easily."

"They also have something directly to compare it to, also being at secondary school." Schooling in Vanuatu is very different, with teachers using the rotelearning model via a chalk board, and absolute silence in the classroom.

The visitor traffic has not only been one way. St Andrew's in Christchurch had two students from Onesua visit in 2008, and the GMO is bringing over the Onesua librarian for two weeks' training in a New Zealand library this year.

Andrew says a key concern is that Onesua's hospitality is not abused. He's in regular contact with the school and with the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu, and this year GMO will be sending a grant to the school to make sure all the hidden costs of visits are covered.

By Amanda Wells Spanz

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Graduating ordinands in 2009



My name is Anne Stewart and I am currently an intern based in St Stephen's Parish in Bryndwr, Christchurch. I am married to Martin, he and Hana, Sam and Josh help keep me grounded! We came to Christchurch from Dunedin just over two years ago and are very grateful to find ourselves part of such a great parish. St Stephen's has been a wonderful place, full of patient and encouraging people, in which to be based during the formation part of my training. I am especially enjoying the way the Knox Centre is enabling me to blend the theoretical and practical dimensions of training for the ministry.



My name is Brendan O'Hagan and I am 42 years old. My wife Ingrid and I have four delightful children. We attend St Margaret's Presbyterian Church in Christchurch, where I train as an Ordinand.

Prior to completing a theological degree in 2007, I served for 14 years as a Youth Pastor, both in Tirau and Palmerston North. God's call to ordained ministry developed during these challenging and rewarding years of youth ministry. My passion is to equip the Church to be God's people in the community.



Hi I'm Jenny, I'm married to Steve and have three adult children and grandchildren.

I am currently a Locally Ordained Minister at Kawerau, so I'm working my way towards National Ordination.

I am passionate about the Church, seeing people coming to faith and developing the call of God on their lives. My hearts desire is to make Christ known in all that I do.





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GLOBAL MISSION OFFICE

Special appeal marks magnitude of Indian work

The movie "Gandhi" was part of the Year 11 curriculum at St Kentigern College and I must have watched it more than 40 times. I could never bring muself to stop showing it as I was sure the students would never watch it if I didn't make them.

To stand in the garden where the massacre of Amritsar took place, with an ex-student as my personal guide, was an experience I never envisaged, even in my wildest dreams. The visit to Amritsar and the Golden Temple, which is the centre of world Sikhism, was a must-see when we travelled to Pathankot for the 13th Synod of the Church of North India.

The other indelible memory of the trip also involves students. But this time I was standing outside Christ Church in Jagadhri as the congregation began to gather for Sunday worship. To watch as past students, their children and even their grandchildren came and with such genuine respect and affection greeted their former teacher, the Rev Doreen Riddell, was a wonderful moment. To be taken on a guided tour of the Christian Hospital and St Thomas School and to hear Doreen marvel at all the expansion and changes made me realise how successful this mission is - because when Doreen's time at St Thomas School ended, so too did the New Zealand missionary era. Ever since then, the school and hospital have been in the expert hands of Indian Christians.

- Rev Andrew Bell

Following the General Assembly and the centenary celebration of our mission work in the Punjab, my first job as Moderator was to accompany Doreen and Andrew to Jagadhri in North India. Our visit followed the reception of delegates from the Church of North India to our General Assembly and a commerative function attended by the Governor General, the Honourable Anand Satyanand.

Nowadays our involvement in this mission is not to send personnel but rather to offer prayer and financial support for the work of the Christian Hospital and St Thomas School. The Global Mission Office, the Association of Presbyterian Women and the Friends of Jagadhri have played a significant role in this regard over the years.

The Christian Hospital plans to establish a hospice, develop courses in medical laboratory technology and upgrade their nursing course to BSc level, as required by the Government. St Thomas School has plans to extend and upgrade its facilities. I was impressed by the strong Christian ethos of both school and hospital, and by their profile in the community. Kumla Singh and Dr Cecil Harrison provide outstanding leadership. People's health and educational needs are tended to regardless of their faith or social status.

- Right Rev Dr Graham Redding



Graham and Doreen travel by rickshaw.

Moderator's Special Appeal Let's raise \$100,000

To celebrate 100 years of mission work in the Punjab

- > \$2700 already given by GA08 Commissioners
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- or \$3 per member

Need more info? Contact Right Rev Dr Graham Redding (gredding@knoxcollege.ac.nz) or the Global Mission Office (globalmanager@xtra.co.nz)



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Phone: 09 276 4313 Mobile: 027 2155 145

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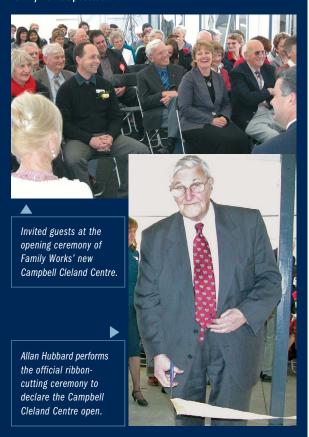


Presbyterian Support

PRESBYTERIAN SUPPORT SOUTH CANTERBURY

Presbyterian Support South Canterbury celebrated the opening of its new Family Works facility recently. The official opening was carried out by long serving Board member Allan Hubbard, who spoke about the dedication of the two children's home matrons after whom the building was named, Miss Catherine Campbell and Miss Jessie Cleland. The Campbell Cleland Centre is now the new site for Presbyterian Support South Canterbury's child and family services and will house up to 18 full- and part-time staff delivering programmes including parenting, social workers in schools, counselling, elder abuse, general family support and a number of other services. Chief Executive Michael Parker is excited about the prospects for the new building and the opportunities that will arise from being more centrally located and operating as a stand-alone service. "Family Works has gone from strength to strength in this region. The professionalism of its staff and the appropriateness of the services being delivered should provide great comfort to the people of South Canterbury that when they need support - we are here to help".

For more information about this article or to access Family Works Services in South Canterbury, please contact (03) 688-5029 or familyworks@pssc.co.nz.



PRESBYTERIAN SUPPORT NORTHERN

A fabulous evening of food, music and fine jewellery will be the highlight of the April 2009 social calendar. Presbyterian Support Northern is hosting a relaxed dinner and auction called *Jazz & Jewels* on 2 April at the Hyatt Regency, Auckland, to support its work with children and families. through its Family Works service.

The need for our Family Works counselling and social work services is continuing to grow. In 2008 Family Works Northern staff provided services to more than 3000 adults and 3300 children. More than 500 people participated in our educational programmes, such as parenting programmes.

All our family-directed programmes and services aim to:

- >> Overcome the effects of abuse
- >> Overcome problematic behaviour
- >> Develop parenting skills
- >> Strengthen family relationships
- >> Help children and young people make positive changes
- >> Increase confidence and self-esteem

The proceeds from the evening will go directly to help Family Works support New Zealand children and families to face their challenges and build healthier families and stronger communities.

Sponsored by Walker and Hall, *Jazz & Jewels* promises to be a wonderfully entertaining evening, featuring musical interludes by talented students from our supporting schools, St Kentigern and St Cuthbert's. Star performer and singer Jackie Clarke is the master of ceremonies for the evening, which will include live and silent auctions and delicious catering and beverages.

Your support to make this evening a success is much appreciated. To secure your tickets to the event, visit www.jazzandjewels.co.nz or to support Presbyterian Support Northern's work with families, donate online at www.psn.org.nz, or phone (09) 520-8603.





There are huge returns on saving God's Creation for your grandchildren. *Caring for Creation* is the latest Presbyterian Church social issues booklet; it examines issues that affect the Earth and what we can do about the ecological crisis we face as individuals and congregations. The booklet also examines the many ways that Christians are leading the way by being faithful stewards of God's Creation.

Caring for Creation is the fifth in a series of group study booklets produced by the Presbyterian Church to encourage congregations to reflect about contemporary issues that are impacting our communities. Copies of the previous four study guides, House to Home, Caring for our Children, Connecting with Young People and Bring on the Baby Boomers are also still available. Email info@presbyterian.org.nz or phone Sandra on [04] 801-6000 and us know how many free copies you would like.

All five studies can be downloaded from the Presbyterian Church website

Home>>Social Justice and Advocacy>>Resources>>Studies



CWS partners help communities survive climate change

Drought, flooding, and melting icesheets are making headlines now that climate change is recognised as a major contributor to such environmental events.

But out of the limelight, millions of people in developing countries are struggling to deal with environmental change that threatens the viability of their communities. Many see this as a result of economic practices that are out of balance with God's creation. In response, CWS is launching a focus on climate change with the Walk for the Planet that starts on Stewart Island (Rakiura) on Ash Wednesday and will end in Wellington on Easter Sunday.

"In responding to the challenges of climate change, CWS wanted to do something that offered opportunities for reflection and encouraged new actions in local communities and more sustainable policies," says campaign coordinator Gillian Southey. "Growing numbers of Christians are seeking ways to live more justly with God's creation. The Walk for the Planet is an expression of this desire."

For Tet Naraval, of CWS partner Developers Foundation in the Philippines, "development must be in harmony with

commercial fish farms at an alarming rate.
Old people say the mangroves were once thick and healthy, protecting them from storms. Now there is increased coastal erosion and greater exposure to damaging typhoons. Fish stocks - the local staple food – are declining. The mangroves were breeding grounds for a wide variety of fish but many species have disappeared. "Now the only fish you can buy in the markets are juvenile fish that used to be thrown back in the sea for being too small," says Tet.

the environment". In Aklan province,

mangrove swamps are being removed for

CWS is supporting mangrove protection and restoration in the region, which coastal communities see "as critical for their future", explains Tet. It is an uphill struggle. Local government is slow to give permission for replanting. After four years of waiting, one community just went ahead. They could not afford to leave it any longer. "It is their life and security for their children, their families," says Tet. It takes only five to 10 years for mangrove planting to make an impact. Once new mangroves are established, Developers will build up income opportunities linked to them. Environmental planning and education is now a central part of all their work.

In Tonga, CWS partners also incorporate environmental aspects into their programmes. The village of Koloa on Vava'u has already suffered a fate that awaits many Pacific communities. Salination of the aquifers has made tap water unusable. "It is not just a bit salty," says Trish Murray, CWS Programmes Coordinator. "It tastes like sea water. It can't be used for drinking,

cooking, washing or feeding animals and it kills plants."

The Tonga Community Development Trust (TCDT) is responding with environmental education, protection programmes and a return to sustainable living. They run community nurseries providing plants for food, beautification, medicines, weaving and coastal protection. The replanting is helping protect land from rising seas, storms and increasing salination. Women are producing their own food and materials for funeral wreaths and leis that they used to buy, and more land is being utilised for gardens. "I don't need a lot of money now," explains Ana. Since training, she is encouraging people to plant to counter greenhouse effects. Jessica, now a gardenmad grandmother, says, "I have to have dirty hands for my family to survive."

In India, CWS partner SAND has formed over 50 ecoclubs to provide environmental education in local schools. Many have planted gardens, with medicinal plants such as tulsi (for treating colds), nutritious food and neem, a natural pesticide. The children are quick to point out that "using plastics is bad". One explained, "prior to SAND working with us, we sometimes used plastic cups for drinking tea and then threw them away, now we don't". In their home villages, people now use hand woven recycling baskets to separate their rubbish. "Nature is our friend" is the message they have taken to heart.

Please contact CWS to get involved with the climate change campaign. Phone 0800 74 73 72, cws@cws.org.nz



In South India, CWS is funding Ecoclubs, which teach school children to protect their environment grow more plants and recycle.

Keep Hope Alive for the Planet

In the Philippines, mangrove forests protect coastal lands from storms and provide a breeding ground for fish but 90% of the forests have been destroyed in many areas.

YOU CAN HELP to rebuild the mangrove forests that nurture coastal communities. Donate now to support the environmental work of CWS partners.





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